1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2



628 682 of the murdered man, and a feud would be set up between them and the local group to which the murderer belonged. Such was one of the common causes of origin of the petty warfare that formerly existed in the Andamans, which will be referred to later in the present chapter.

627 685 Cases of theft seem to have been rare. It was left to the aggrieved person to take vengeance upon the thief, but if he killed him or seriously wounded him he would have to expect the possible vengeance of the relatives and friends. Adultery 627 was regarded as a form of theft. I gathered that a man had the right to punish his wife for unfaithfulness, but if the punishment 684 were too severe it would be an occasion for a quarrel with her relatives. It was difficult for the aggrieved husband to punish the man who had offended against him. If he killed him he would lay himself open to the revenge of the relatives. The most he could do was to vent his anger in violent words.

578 Women also occasionally quarrel with one another and swear forcibly at one another, or even get so far as to destroy one 626 another's belongings, or to fight with their fists or sticks. The men hesitate to interfere, and the quarrel can only be stopped by some woman of influence.

The frequent occurrence of serious quarrels is prevented both by the influence of the older men and by the fear that everyone has of the possible vengeance of others should he in any way offend them.

183 626 There are a number of actions which, while they do not offend any particular person, are regarded as being anti-social. One of these is laziness. Every man is expected to take his proper share in providing both himself and others with food. Should a man shirk this obligation, nothing would be said to him, unless he were a young unmarried man, and he would still be given food by others, but he would find himself occupying a position of inferiority in the camp, and would entirely lose the esteem of his fellows. Other qualities or actions that result in a similar loss of esteem are marital unfaithfulness, lack of respect to others and particularly to elders, meanness or niggardliness, and bad temper. One man was mentioned to me as being a bad man because he refused to take a wife after he had

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reached the age when it is considered proper for a man to marry. In recent times at least one young man has refused to undergo the privations connected with the initiation ceremonies. This was of course a case of gross rebellion against the customs of the tribe, but there was no way of punishing him or of compelling him to conform, save by showing him that he was an object of contempt and ridicule to others. Probably such a refusal to conform to tribal customs could not have taken place before the British occupation of the islands.

Another class of wrong actions consists in the breaking of ritual prohibitions. There are, for example, as will be shown in a later chapter, a number of actions which it is believed may cause bad weather, such as burning bees'-wax or killing a cicada. There is, however, no punishment that can be meted out to any one who does any of these things. The punishment, if we may call it so, is a purely supernatural one, and it strikes not only the offender but every one else as well. In the legends of the Andamanese there are one or two stories related of how one of the ancestors, being angry, deliberately performed one of the forbidden actions and thus brought a storm that destroyed many human beings[1]. There are other ritual prohibitions the non-observance of which is supposed to bring its own punishment on the offender, who, it is believed, will be ill.

The medicine-men (*oko-jumu*) are credited with the power to work evil magic, and by its means to make other people ill, and even to kill them. A man suspected of evil magic might be liable to the vengeance of those who thought that they had been injured by him, but though the practice was regarded as reprehensible it does not seem that the society ever acted as a whole to punish a man suspected of it.

Children are reproved for improper behaviour, but they are never punished. During their years of infancy they are much spoilt, not only by their parents but by every one. During the period of adolescence every boy and girl has to undergo a somewhat severe discipline, to be described in a later chapter.

[1] See below, Chap. IV.

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882 This probation, if it may be so called, is enforced by a unanimous public opinion. The discipline lasts until the man or woman is married and a parent, or if childless as so many now are, until he or she has settled down to a position of responsibility.

627 Thus, though the Andaman Islanders had a well developed social conscience, that is, a system of moral notions as to what is right and wrong, there was no such thing as the punishment of a crime by the society. If one person injured another it was left to the injured one to seek vengeance if he wished and if he dared. There were probably always some who would side with the criminal, their attachment to him overcoming their disapproval of his actions. The only painful result of anti-social
● 626 actions was the loss of the esteem of others. This in itself was a punishment that the Andamanese, with their great personal vanity, would feel keenly, and it was in most instances sufficient to prevent such actions. For the rest, good order depended largely on the influence of the more prominent men and women.

000 We have so far considered only the general regulation of conduct in the local group, without giving any attention to the more special regulations dependent on relationships by blood and by marriage. In all human societies there is a system of rights and duties regulating the conduct towards one another of persons who are related either by consanguinity or through marriage. In primitive societies these particular rights and duties occupy a position of preponderating importance, owing, no doubt, to the small number of persons with whom any single person comes into effective social contact. When a large proportion of the men and women with whom any person comes in contact are related to him, it is clear that relationship must count for a good deal in regulating the everyday life of the people.

Different societies have different systems of relationship. This means, not only that they attach different duties to particular relations, but also that they have different ways of reckoning the relationships themselves. The vast majority of primitive peoples have some one or other form of what is known to ethnologists

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges



the finger-tips and almost pink, with pale chocolate moons and yellowish-brown palms and soles. In the adults the nails and soles of the feet remain pale, the palms being a little darker. The head, and the visible buccal and nasal epithelia, were almost black, and the gums were pink, as was the inside of the lips, with dark petechiae, in adults very noticeable, at the base of the teeth and over the tongue and palate. The cheeks, however, were a reddish-brown, although the whole skin was already showing signs of darkening after twelve hours. Nasal cartilage was minimal, but that of the ears well-developed. The darkest area of skin were the forehead, eye sockets, lids, nipples and genitalia.

In general, therefore, the infant's skin was very slightly lighter than that of the adults, though before I could be sure of this I had to wash off the thick layer of ochre which is smeared over the unwashed infants immediately after birth. As the infants are extremely carefully protected from the sun by 'umbrella' hats made of lobed palm leaves, the darkening, which is complete by the end of the first year, is clearly biological and is not effected by tanning. As, however, the Onges interchange or 'adopt' children freely, it was impossible to carry out any proper colorimetric observations.

I saw no albinos in the Onges, usually fairly common in dark-skinned peoples. I saw several in Africa, with apparently normal parents. Some African peoples destroy albinos at birth as they do those with deformities, and the Andamanese may do the same, as I saw little congenital deformity (see, however, p. 46). Fear of being held responsible for disasters which befall the group carries great weight, and it is possible that the two cases of abnormality which I did see did not manifest symptoms at birth. Twins, however, are clearly (and gladly) accepted, so eager are the Onges to have children.

It was already clear in the infant that it would have the somatic characteristics common to all Negritos as regards the proportions of the body, the form and dimensions of the head, absence of prognathism, comparatively fine lips, nose and ears, black skin, and woolly hair, and would be well below 1·5 metres in height when fully grown. Above all, the Andamanese have a large forehead, very wide-angled jaw and large mouths, with the upper lips not invariably full, as in Negroes. Many Onges, in fact, have fine features,